

West African Kingdoms (Ashante) Factors to Consider

Student Name _____ Date _____

- 1) Cowrie shells were used as currency in West Africa and could be purchased by European traders in large numbers from the Maldives Islands in the Indian Ocean.
- 2) There was also a high demand in West Africa for Indian cotton cloth.
- 3) West African states did not have a navy of their own and relied on foreign contacts to import cowrie shells, cotton cloth, as well as other desirable goods such as guns, tobacco, copper, and alcohol.
- 4) Plantations in the Americas need a steady supply of labor to work on sugar and tobacco plantations.
- 5) Competition between West African kingdoms led to frequent warfare.
- 6) In West Africa, wars between kingdoms resulted in the taking of captives who were then used as slaves. Powerful West African kingdoms controlled large numbers of slaves who were the soldiers of competitive states and a constant threat.
- 7) The Asante Kingdom controlled its internal trade and regulated trade with foreign merchants.
- 8) Kongo leaders had difficulty controlling European merchants, leading to the capture of African elites and the destabilization African Kingdoms. Many West African traders adopted European styles and learned European languages.